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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/08/2019
TAGS: [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAL](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: RESPONSE: JORDANIAN PM ASKS FOR PROPOSAL TO
ASSIST IN RESETTLEMENT OF WALID PALESTINIANS

REF: AMMAN 73

Classified By: A/AS Kelly Ryan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1.(C) The Department read with great interest reftel regarding the GOJ's interest in facilitating the resettling of Palestinians from Al-Walid as expressed by PM Nader Al-Dhabi. We welcome the Prime Minister's interest in helping to find a durable solution for this vulnerable refugee population and both he and the GOJ are to be commended for their willingness to take concrete steps toward ameliorating the suffering of this besieged group of individuals.

2.(C) At this time PRM is investigating two distinct possibilities for processing the Palestinian caseload from Al-Walid. The first would involve processing in Jordan, either in Amman or a more remote location closer to the Jordan-Iraq border. As you are aware, we have robust processing capabilities in Jordan and have been working closely with UNHCR to identify possible locations outside of Amman, including the de-commissioned camp at Ruwayshid. The Regional Admissions Refugee Coordinator, Regional DHS Field Officer, OPE Amman Director, and a representative from UNHCR Jordan plan to travel to Ruwayshid next week to evaluate the likelihood of it being able to serve as a staging, transit, and/or processing point for this group.

3.(C) The second option that we are investigating would involve processing the group in Iraq, at a location at or near Al-Walid. We are pursuing this alternative with full vigor and the Refugee Coordinators in Baghdad have been in contact with the MNF-I whose cooperation would be required to make this option feasible. But we realize that the Iraq option is immensely more complicated than any other and would take many months to bring to fruition even with the full cooperation of UNHCR, GOI, MNF-I, and DHS/USCIS. Further, given the real security and logistical challenges of operating in such a remote part of the country, it is doubtful that in-country processing could occur at the speed preferred by all parties in light of the conditions at the camp.

4.(C) When we develop a plan for resettling this group via Jordan, we will do everything possible to satisfy the needs and alleviate the concerns of the GOJ in allowing this group of Palestinians into its territory. Though we recognize the GOJs desire to have the process completed on a single trip to Jordan, this is highly unlikely given the security, medical, and other checks required for refugee admission to the U.S. We could commit to try to undertake an accelerated processing schedule.

5.(C) We echo Post's desire to take advantage of this opportunity presented by the GOJ. In order to do so we will require the Embassy's cooperation in investigating, and ultimately implementing, a plan that will lead to the expeditious processing of this group in a way that is not only acceptable to the GOJ but also in compliance with the

procedures required under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. We will coordinate a preliminary plan for your review and comment with subsequent presentation to the GOJ shortly after the completion of next week's mission to Ruwayshid. If deemed prudent, we encourage the Embassy to notify the GOJ of our progress on developing a plan.

RICE